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Pathway to God

(A Journal of Spiritual Life)

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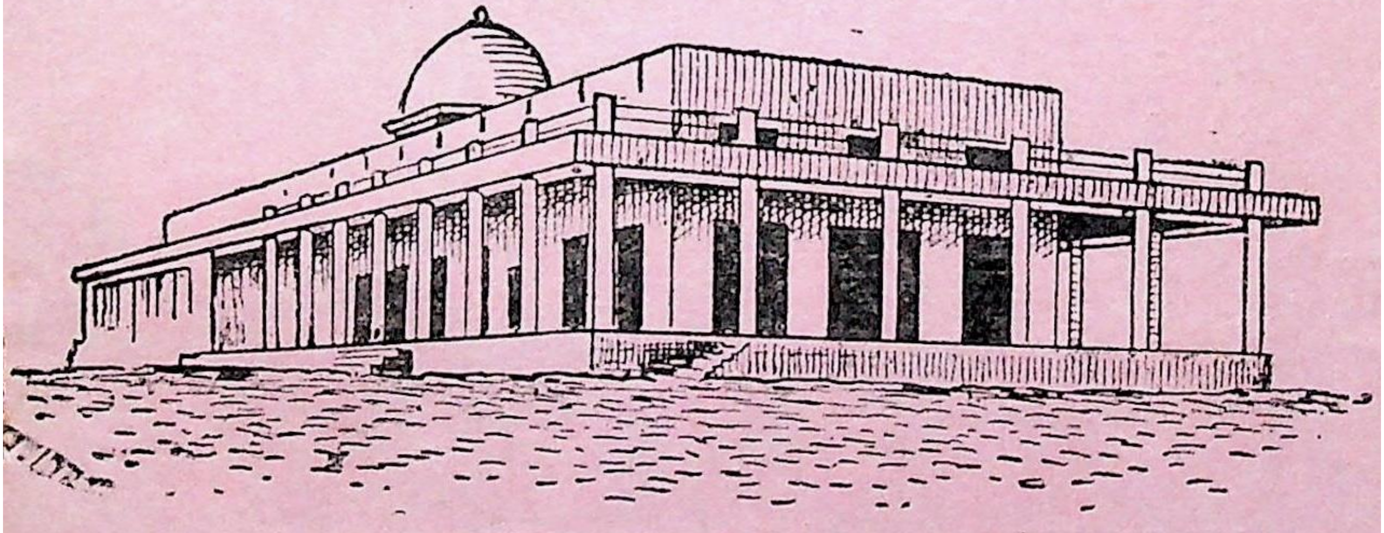
आत्मा वा अरे द्रष्टव्यः



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PATHWAY TO GOD

(A Journal of Spiritual Life)

EDITOR

Prof. D. G. Deshpande

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Pathway to God

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PRAYER

वायुर्यमोऽग्निर्वरुणः शशाङ्कः प्रजापतिस्त्वं प्रपितामहश्च ।
नमो नमस्तेऽस्तु सहस्रकृत्वः पुनश्च भूयोऽपि नमो नमस्ते ॥

Bhagavad Gita 11-39

You are Vayu, Yama, Agni, Varuna, the Moon, Prajapati and the Great-grandfather, Salutation, Salutation to You, a thousand times, and again and again Salutation to You.

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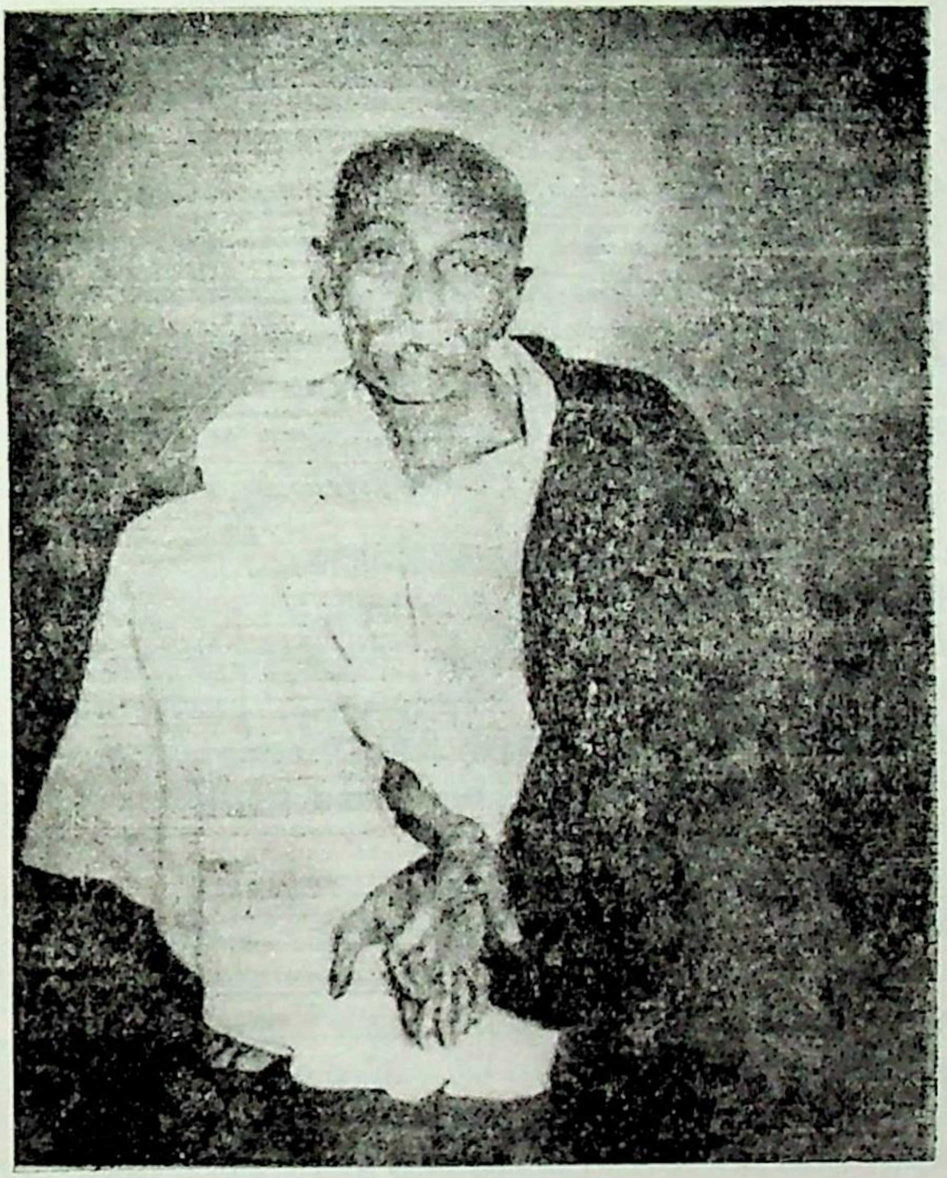

Born - Jamkhandi
3-7-1886

Samadhi - Nimbal
6-6-1957

EDITORIAL

On Friday the 24th of June 1983. I was going to Belgaum with an educated Brahmin friend of mine That was a " VATPOURNIMA " day and a number of women had assembled in front of an 'Aswath' tree and worshipping the tree according to Hindu religious tradition. This friend of mine looked at the worshipping women and started critising the tenets, rituals and myths of the Hindu religion.

It is a practice of many educated Hindus to Criticise the tenets of Hindu religion and they take pride in doing so. These educated people do not study the principles of the Hindu religion but pretend that they have got all knowledge and when contradicted expose their iqnorance. One should not talk on a subject which he has not studied,

In primitive socities religious rules were the only rules which dominated all the actions of an individual. Religion dominated politics, social activity, education, health, morality and what not. As civilization advanced existing religious rules began to be questioned in the light of advanced knowledge in different fields. And now religion is treated as a private way of life of an individual and he should follow it in any way he likes. Our cons itution has declared India as a secular state. Many educated Indians wrongl. believe that a secular state means a state without any religion. A secular state means a state wherein the citizens have full freedom to follow any faith of their choice. The state will not interfere in the religious practices of any religion followed by its citizens or a section of its citizens. The state shall not encourage any particular religion-even the religion practiced and followed by the majority of its citizens. Pakistan has declared that it is a Moslem state so also Bangal Desh, In India. however, there is no state religion. The freedom of minority communities to practice their religion is guaranteed by the constitution.

Hindu religion is appropriately called सनातन धर्म and its roots have gone very deep, far and wide, Each ritual or principle of Hindu religion has got some significance which must be studied and understood, If some rules or principles have become obsolete in charged circumstances there is no harm in discarding them, But this should be done after thorough study.

What is the significance of " Vatapournima " puja by women? Apart from religion, has it got any other significance? This is a subject for research. It is no use simply criticising that the Hindus still worship, trees stones and animals, Lot of literature is available to those who are really interested in doing research in this field. I appeal to teachers of Hindu philosophy and Sanskrit in Indian Universities to take up extensive research and enlighten the community of the significance of each and every ritual of Hindu religion,

These matters apart, the easence of our religion is to lead a simple, honest and pious life and to help within one's means, these who are unfortunate and needy.

GARDEN OF EDEN

Prof. - M. P. L. Lakhani, M.Sc.

God decided to create. He created minerals, plants and animals and then He created Man, He created man in His own image, with creative faculty and desired him to be His co-worker in the work of creation.

According to the 'Fall of Man' in the Book of Genesis, God told Adam that he had the world of mineral, plant and animal life to organise, control and develop, that in this task he would be guided by God Himself, that he should always listen to the voice and direction of God; that if he did so, he would have no trouble; his food and other necessities would be made available to him; that he shall not have to labour for his sustenance.

Then to provide Adam with company as also with complimentary qualities, God created Eve for him.

To accomplish their work, Adam and Eve were given instruments and powers - the senses, heart and mind. They were told to restrict themselves to the task assigned to them and not to go beyond it, not to dabble in the how, why and wherefore of the mineral, plant and animal worlds. With the instruments and powers provided, they could venture in those fields but they were specifically ordered not to do so - they were ordered not to eat the fruit of the forbidden tree of knowledge.

Adam and later Adam and Eve both worked together diligently in accordance with God's guidance, according to His Plan, according to His will and were very happy doing the work assigned to them.

They organised the world As the time went by, they got engrossed in the work, they were carried away by the success and in her enthusiasm, Eve, being inquisitive and nosy, wanted to go beyond the prescribed limits of their work and wanted to know the why and wherefore of things. She prevailed upon Adam and made him transgress the Divine orders. They started eating the fruit of the forbidden tree of knowledge. They did not wait for God's guidance, they forgot to listen to His voice and got engrossed in the joy of achievement and forsook God.

But they did not have the necessary knowledge and understanding to carry on the work. according to Plan and they got lost in the maze of Maya. Finding that their work was not proceeding smoothly, they indulged more and more into the mysteries of matter with a view to know and be able to work successfully.

God felt displeased with them for using their own self-will instead of His will and told them that if they thought that they were capable of running the world by themselves, let them try and that they would be responsible for what they did and will have to bear the consequences of their handiwork. That he will no longer provide them with their food and necesities free, that they will have to work for their own sustenance. And He turned them out of the Garden of Eden and placed an Angel with a Flamming Sword at the entrance of the Garden to keep them from entering it.

Thus was man condemned to eat his bread by the sweat of his brow That is, he could know, he could gather knowledge, material as also spiritual, by his own efforts by struggling and suffering The more he delved into this knowledge, greater will be the effort required of him.

Adam and Eve in their blindness, in their ignorance, in their intoxication, heeded Him not. They made a mess of things and got embroiled in the mesh of their own making. Instead of keeping the animal plant and mineral powers under their control, little by little, they came under the spell of their power - they became the ruled instead of being the rulers.

Man started with doing God's work and ended by getting himself lost.

By transgressing the Divine order, by using his self-will did man fall a prey to the material or lower forces what is called the Satan and his hordes. And in order to be able to re-enter the Garden, he had to be killed by the Angel with the Flaming sword - i. e., before he could re-enter the kingdom of the Spirit, he has to destroy his lower, nature, he has to extricate himself from the power of material forces and keep them under his own control. Then again he will be able to listen to the voice of God which speaks to his soul and he can work according to God's Plan.

God, in His infinite love and mercy did not forget man. From time to time, He has sent Messengers to remind man of his origin, his work, his destiny. He has been told, as for example, Krishna said in Gita, that man must dedicate his action to God and not look for its fruit, i. e , man must once more learn to listen to and act according to the Voice of God. When man learns to do so, will paradise be regained, then will man have fulfilled his destiny.

Hindu philosophy says the same thing, though in a different way; God created man and sent him forth to experiment with and gain experience through the material forces. All philosophies more or less, agree that there are seven planes of existence and corresponding degrees of consciousness. The seven planes are the planes of Spirit, Soul, Wisdom, Human, Animal. Plant and Mineral. Man. starting from Spirit, descends into matter and then again ascends back to the Spirit. The first part of the journey consists of the descent from the Spirit into matter, the going forth, called Evolution where man uses his self-will. The second part consists of ascent from matter to the Spirit, the path of return called Involution. when man gives up his self-will and accepts God's will. The two-way journey constitutes the whole circle of Life from Spirit. back to Spirit - from the Garden of Eden back to the Garden of Eden,

Ancient Indian writings tell how, in those ancient days. kings and others could hear the voice of God - Akashvani – and how they could recognise the messengers of God, who would walk into their courts and give them guidance which was thankfully received and acted upon But, as man got more and more steeped in the material life, this faculty got lost and man could no longer hear the voice of God or recognise His messengers. That is why Christ was crucified; and other messengers were not recognised and understood.

This history is repeated in the life-story of every human being. When a child is born, it is in communion with its soul and with spiritual powers. It is common knowledge that a child experiences states of joy and sorrow, pain and pleasure for which there is no apparent cause. These states are due to reactions of contact with his soul and higher powers. As the child grows and its senses develop, as it learns the use of his limbs as It discovers its own mind and as it learns to have its own will, its contact with the spiritual forces decreases, till it is entirely lost and its pain and pleasure depend upon material causes. So long it is a child, in communion with God. all its needs are supplied by the mother and it is well served. But as it grows and exercises powers of its own senses, mind and will. the free service decreases; it has to exert itself to satisfy its wants; and as it grows into manhood he has to work to supply his needs, he hes to struggle and suffer and eat his bread by the sweat of his, brow. Sometimes, there is one, who realises his plight, frees himself from the clutches of the material forces re-establishes his contact with God then is he saved, he re-enters the Garden.

When Adam and Eve ate the fruit of the forbidden tree of knowledge, they discovered their power of procreation. To start with, the children born were spiritually inclined. But generation after generation as man came more and more under the spell of the material forces, the children born were materially minded, so that, step by step. man strayed farther away from God-hood.

Man is the vessel that contains the seed; woman is the vessel in which the seed is nurtured. Medical science tells us that the physical, emotional and mental conditions of the mating pair, at the time of mating, have a profound effect upon the child conceived Also that the feelings, emotions and thoughts of the mother, during the period of gestation, have a telling affect on the temperament of the child- So that, the state of mind and the nature of the pairing couple is an important factor in determining the type of the child produced, If the pairing couple, before pairing, adjust their feeling and thoughts and during pairing turn their mind to God, the resulting progeny will be better equipped to carry out the plan of God and, in course of time, the humanity can regain the lost paradise.

Man is capable of understanding and controlling with his mind the three lower forces viz., mineral, plant and animal, while the higher three - Roohani Rahmani and Rabani are beyond the ken of his mind, His mind can neither know nor understand and explain them. This knowledge could be understood only by his Soul and that knowledge can come to him only by God's Grace - as a gift. He cannot get at it by his own effort, his own will or the exercise of his mental powers, God's Grace can descend upon man only when he has conquered and subjugated the lower forces in himself, and stilled his mind. This is Death before the actual physical death. This death is the liquidation of the lower forces in man. At this death, is man born to the higher spiritual forces This is what is symbolised by the death and resurrection of Christ.

All true philosophies, all true religions, all true spiritual disciplines aim at the same thing – conquering the lower forces and stilling the mind. Purpose of concentration and meditation Is to quieten the mind, to keep it away from constant activity. It is only the blank mind that can receive the Divine guidance. Mind withdrawn from the sensual pursuits and desiros, mind unaffected by the wind of the lower forces, can alone receive the Grace of God. Free Masonry also teaches the same thing when it says that the Mason must re-discover the lost secrets at the centre of the circle,

Mystical literature talks of 'Death' before the physical death. ' Death does not mean the killing of the material forces in man or destruction of senses the instruments of perception of the material existence; it only means death of their dominance in man, it means putting these forces in their proper place for use in the worldly life, because they are needed for man's physical and material life and well-being.

Nor does Resurrection mean that man has to give up his worldly life and take to sanyas. Resurrection does not preclude worldly life. If man has to renounce the world, how will he carry on God's work or organising matter: how will he experiment and gain experience of worldly life; While living in the world, man can and is required to live the life of the Spirit. No prophet. no messenger, no true religion advocates the renunciation of life of the world. Krishna, Christ, Nanak and others have taught how to live the life of the Spirit while living the life of a house-holder.

In spiritual and mystical literature, the expression 'ferry across the ocean' occurs often. A Guru, a Guide, ferrys a disciple across the ocean of material life It means that Guru helps the disciple who is ready, who has learned to be unaffected by the sensual passions, who has learned to still his mind, to receive direct contact from the Divine Spirit and thereafter, conduct his life in accordance with His Will. Several instances are recorded in different places.

Once Guru Nanak met a businessman who surrendered his all - body, mind and wealth - to the Guru. Thereupon, the Guru asked him to do something and the businessman did not reply immediately. The Guru asked him as to what he was doing "Thinking", replied the man And the Guru said, "How can you think. One thinks with his mind, you have surrendered your mind to me, you cannot use that which you have given away", He understood what the Guru meant - the real surrender of mind, and stopped thinking. And he was ferried across so it is recorded,

One of the Sikh Gurus, once proclaimed, that he who can recite the Jap Sahib. in His presence, one pointedly, without his mind wandering, will get whatever he demands, One Sikh was confident that he could do so and commenced reciting the Jap Sahib. His mind remained quiet and he recited the Jap Sahib without any disturbance from his mind. As he was finishing, he wished that as a reward the Guru may give him His own beautiful horse, The Guru read his wish and announced that He was so very pleased with the performance of the Sikh that He was about to confer on him moksha, but since, at the last moment he wished to possess my horse. I give that to him. The Sikh lost a rare opportunity because his mind or rather his desires were not entirely under his control and so he was not ready for the Divine contact.

It is said that Raman Maharishi disliked anyone touching his feet. He discouraged talking and would ask his visitors to sit quiet in his presence and he himself would go off in samadhi. In samadhi, he was working on a higher plane trying to help his visitors to control their mind and so help them to progress towards a state when direct contact with the Divine could be got. Talking and asking him questions was work on mental plane which he discouraged. And several friends have felt the experience that in his presence, their mind was stilled and the questions they wanted to ask him looked so foolish and the difficulties that they felt before seemed to have dissolved.

It is a common experience that in the presence of a Real Spiritual Being, one's mind is stilled, one feels a deep calm. In fact, this is one of the tests of a person of high Spiritual attainment.

Here is where the need of a Guru comes in, which is so much emphasised, at least, in India. The two way journey of a soul is from Individuality, consisting of the three spiritual forces, into Personality, consisting of the three material forces. Since ages, man has been affected and dominated by the lower forces. In order to master, regulate and utilise these forces, need of a guide or a Guru is essenetial. Little by little, step by step, the Guru will teach and guide and lead the disciple from Darkness to Light. Personality has not to be destroyed, it is to be put in its proper place and made use of. Reality will be realized by the Individuality. Then will man realise that Spirit and Matter, Positive and Negative, are only two sides of the same coin of Reality.

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Hindu renaissance in 19th century India

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[Paper presented by Dr. S. G. Nigal to the Philosophy Association, Bhiwandi.]

The concept of renaissance is borrowed from the history of western ideas, Renaissance period is a transition period that covers 14th, 15th and 16th centuries after Christ. During the medieval period Western Philosophy was only a servant of theology. There was no freedom of thought and no freedom to interpret the Bible independently of the Church Authorities, During the renaissance period there was a revolt against authority both in the field of knowledge and religion. Renaissance is rebirth of Greek literature and arts. Reformation implies religious reforms, and enlightenment refers to new philosophical and scientific progress.

Customarily renaissance refers to a cultural movement whcih began in Italy (14th century) and spread throughout Europe. Ancient forms of excellence in various aspects of. life were studied and appreciated and even venerated Medieval models were rejected and ancient models were emulated In short, the light was kindled which naturally shone in all directions The most important effect of this process was the emergence ot humanism, The Greek classics were the products of human mind. The death of Socrates was a sign of fearles martyrdom in the cause of rationalism and philosophy. Thus faith in man's capacities increased.

The hold of the Church weakened, It also gave importance to scientific study of nature. Knowledge was gradually humanised, This led to free philosophical thinking, Scientific investigation and personal interpretations of religious scriptures, In short, man's achievements were praised and his talents were honoured. New systems of thought were produced,

In the light of these considerations, we will deal with the process of awakening in 19th century India, Indian renaissance involves the awakening of the cultural, social and national awareness among the Indians. the process of awakening is to be studied on the background of British rule in India, India was politically fragmented country though there was a kind of cultural unity in India. British Rule unified this country through the introduction of Central Administration uniform currency, English language, Common Criminal Code and means of communication and transport. They also brought with them the liberal ideas of Mill, Spencer and others Some of them started studying India's past and the scriptures of the Hindus, To begin with, they despised us from racial standpoint and denounced our cultural heritage from the standpoint of Christion superiority. The educated Indians studying western literature were influenced by western history and ideas. And thus arose the historical need on the part of the Indians to study India's past which led to the rebirth of vedic literature & other scriptures.

Medieval India was dominated by the mytho logical and negativistic and other-wordly religion. Our philosophy was confined to a particular class, Our social life was dominated by casteism and untouchability. The medieval saints had emerged from almost all sections of the Society. But they could not weaken the hold of casteism. The overall effect of their preaching was negativistic (Inactivism), The Great Shivaji, whom P. G. Sahastrabudhe calls a ' Philosopher of Philosophers,, because he gave a philosophy of revolution and actively tried to bring about determined changes in socio-political, religio-spiritual as well as economic walks of life (p, 386). Unfortunately there was no genius like Vyas to systematically record his thoughts, mission and achievements. Naturally Hindu society remained steeped in a variety of customs, myths and dogmas of the Puranas.

The history of our culture and religion shows that we have been seeking substitutes for the Vedas. The Puranas have been enthroned while the Vedas have been dethroned. The general outlook of the Puranas towards the world and life was one of world-negation and life denying. Actual Hindu society was infested with various social evils like castesim, system of Satee, child marriage, ban on widows remarriage ban on intercaste marriage, untouchability and religious rituals. Idol worship had become mechanical, hence the study of the ancient literature and the past of the Hindus inspired the widely awakened and enlightened individuals to revive the noble in our past and to reject the ignoble in our society. Hence the 19th century awakening in India involves renascent movements reform movements and the emergence of socio-political awareness as well as the desire for modern sciences.

British rule was well-established in West Bengal at the end of 18th century. Up to the first two decades of the 19 th century the spirit of reflective thinking and self criticism grew in Bengal and Maharashtra. It was a period of great challenge of British political and cultural imperialism, The missionaries had attacked Hindu customs and glaringly pointed out the social evils like casteism, untouchability, Satee etc. Naturally the enlightened Indians were awakened out of their dogmatic slumber of centuries, This awakening was expressed in socio-religious movements and the glorification of India's past and culture. Consequently India's history was studied and literature was recovered and translated into English. Some of the western orientalists also lauded Indian literature as a store-house of wisdom. The Indians who responded to this awakening can be divided into three groups. The radicals wanted to totally break with the past. They were much influenced by the Christian propoganda, Hence they were ready to give up Hinduism and embrace Christianity. The conservatives or the orthodox were opposed to make any changes in social customs and religious practices. But there were middle path finders, like Rammohan Banerijee, popularly known as Raja Ram Mohan Roy, who wanted to revive the noble Hindu ideals of the past and combine them with the liberal ideas of the west He studied Hinduism, Christianity and Islam. He was convinced that Hinduism contains same excellent values. His source of Hinduism was the Upanishads.

Of course, to modernize Indian society he was ready to adopt western science and civilisation. In 1815 he started the Atmiya Sabha (Society of the friends). He was very much influenced by Christianity, As a father of renaissance he not only revived the Upanisads. he also started self criticism. Therefore, he was the first social thinker and reformer who wanted Hinduism to be freed from its drawbacks like casteism, untouchability, Satee, polygamy, child marriage and ban or window remarriage. He emphasized monotheism and the religion of piety and benevolence. He was the first to cross the ocean in modern times in 1830. He was the first to stand for the press freedom. He started Brahmo Samaj (the Society of God) on 26th August 1828. He assailed polytheism, ritualism and worship of many images. As an Anglisist he advocated English education. And thus he embodies the new spirit namely freedom of inguiry, thirst for science, human sympathy and regard for the ancient past. But even during his time only the orthodox Brahmins recited the Vedas. Non-Brahmins were not even allowed in the service room

After his death. Devendranath Tagore joined the Samaj in 1842 He himself had started Tatvabodhini Sabha (Truth-teaching Association) Devendranath framed a covenant, became the official Acharya of the Sabha, He stressed the Upanisadic monotheism as well as natural theism. He was also opposed to idolatry and rituals. But the loose organization became a spiritual fraternity under him. He also introduced the ideas of prayer and communion with God, Bhakti or Seva. He also declared that the Vedas are divine revelations.

Keshavchandra Sen joined the Samaj in 1857 and became the Acharya of the Samaj in 1862 and popularised the Samaj. The membership increased from 100 to 2000 within two years Sen stressed intercaste marriages. removal of purdah, Widow-remarriages and removal of idolatry. This emphasis was not liked by some of the members. There fore, the followers under his leadership formed a separate group called Bharatvarshiya Brahmo Samaj. Sen was dismissed from the Original Samaj. Consequently the ramaining samajists called themselves Adi Brahmo Samaj, Sen also stressed the mystical side of religion because he was influenced both by Jesus and Chaitanya. Some of his followers regarded him as an incarnation of God, But in 1878 he gave assent to the marriage of his daughter to a prince of Cooch Behar Both the groom and the bride were underage. This was against the rule of abolition of child-marriages and thus the Bharatiya Brahmo Samaj was split up and the Sadharan Brahmo Samaj was formed. To sum up, Brahmo Samaj stimulated the growth of social values and give great men to Indian National life for instance Ishwarchandra Vidyasagar and encouraged the fight against social evils in Indian society.

Bankimchandra Chatterjee (1838-1894)Bankim started a new Hindu movement He emphasized the husk and kernel aspects of Hinduism. He also emphasized the rational religion and therefore he advocated Dharmarajya (not a theocratic state but a kingdom of righteousness) He was also greatly influenced by the utilitarian thoughts of Mill and others. He is known as a prophet of nationalism But as a philosopher of Hinduism he tried to reinterpret Hinduism. He also was the first modern Indian to stress activism of the Gita. He also emphasized Bhakti as reverential love towards God. Bhakti is the condition of all round development of man's potential lities and turning them towards God. All faculties must be developed and dedicated to God. He was opposed to Godless glorification of man. Since God pervades the whole universe (pantheism), work which is aimed at God, is work aimed at the world, Such work is the best worship of God while popular worship is secondary and aims at the worshiper's purification. Thus selfless action aims at the service of humanity (nishkam karma) He also wrote Krishnacharitra to place a model of selfless and heroic activism before the Hindus. Hence in his famous novel Anand Math (1882), he placed before the Hindus the ideal of selfless ascetic fighting against evils, Bankim's reinterpretation of Hinduism can be seen in his interpretation of the social values like Dana. Accordingly, to him the humanitarian intent of the Dana was neglected and the well know Gita verse (17,29) was interpretated in terms of ritualism which served the interests of the priests, e.g. ' right sort of receiver ' was interpreted to mean a Brahmin'. ' right occasion was interpreted as some auspicious day ' and ' the right place was interpreted as the place of Pilgrimage'. But this verse according to Bankim enjoys charity for the needy. sweeper as much as for the needy brahmin, Thus it is said that Bankim's genius produced a craze for Gita in Calcutta, and encouraged nationalism and patriotism.

Ramkrishna Mission - Brahmo Samaj was confined to upper classes. But both Bankim and Vivekanand were the first in Begal to raise the lower casts by education. Both of them wanted to bring education to the masses. Vivekanand revitalised the Hinduism. His concept of Hinduism was based upon Vedantic Monism. Ramkrishna was a great mystic who, by both precept and practice, demonstrated to the world that the different religions are but different ways of reaching the same goal. Narendranath, a young sceptic and agnostic came in touch with him and became a great exponent of philosophic Hinduism, He also stood for religious and social reform and emphasized inherent divinity of man. He stood for enlightening and elevating the masses without uprooting them from their cultural climate. He also stood for social service as an essential disciplire for spritual life. He established Ramakrishna Mission whose motto is Atmano Moksa Jagat Hitayacha i e. personal salvation by meditation and active service for the masses. He was the first monk who asked the ascetic to do the social service, Swamiji asked the Indians to get themselves freed from what is called ' kitchen religion '. Thus the vendantic doctrine of oneness is the 'rationale of all ethics and spirituality. Therefore, both Ramkrishna and Vivekanand stressed love and service rather than mere mercy.

The life and teachings of Vivekanand have influenced many an Indian leader, Unfortunately the Swami died young though in harress. Therefore, it is very difficult to give justice to the mission of this Great man.

Arya Samaj was started by Swami Dayanand in 1875 in Bombay. He was the first to receive the Vedas as the living scriptures of living religion He freed them from Sayana's ritualism and made them available to one and all. Philosophically, he was opposed to Vedantic non-dualism and the mayavada. He stood for the Samhita part of the Vedas and the militant Vedic Hinduism. He was the first renascent thinker who challenged the orthodox and Puranic religion which indulged in casteism, Untouchability, the worship of many Gods. child marriage, ban on widow remarriage, etc. He also accepted tne challenge of Christians and the Muslisms. He unequivocably declared that Vedas alone constitute the foundation of Hinduism. He also opposed theidolatry, advocated Varnashram based upon worthand declared that the Vedas contained both the principles of spirituality as well as science of actions as well as of worship. Swamiji also stood for nationalism, patriotism and freedom of One's country. The very word Arya Samaj indicates that he wanted to inculcate social awareness and cohesiveness among all the Hindus. Swamiji was a very bold man who exposed the drawbacks of the Puranic religion. as well as that of other religions.

Though Swami Dayanand established the Arya Samaj in Bombay, its influence is seen in Punjab and Harayana, When he came to Pune the orthodox opposed him while Jyotiba Phule and others supported him. Later on, even Shahu Maharaj came under the influence of Arya Samaj. But the Samaj did not take roots in Maharashtra.

Maharastra has produced several social reformers and reniscent thinkers. Dr. Bhau Daji Lad and others started schools and stressed the importance of knowledge. Bal Shastri Jambhekar started a weekly 'Darpan' in 1832 to enlighten the masses in patriotism, religion and knowledge. He stressed the views that the education is the third eye. He also stressed the reconversion of those who had fallen a prey to the other faiths. But he died a premature death. Lokhitavadi was the first to advocate democracy, equality and new education. He also emphasized all sided development of man and stood against social evils. He stressed the view that ignorance is the disease of brahmins in particular and Hindus in general.

K. C. Sen visited Bombay in 1864 and propogated his ideas and thus justice Ranade and others formed the Prarthana Samaj in 1867. Even before that Dadoba Pandurang had started Manav Dharma Sabha in Surat. He also had started Paramhansa Sabha in 1848. The Param hansa Sabha meetings were held secretely. Therefore, it had no impact on the society But Prarthana Samaj emphasized the worship of one God and social reforms.

Another important movement was started in 1873 by Jyotiba Phule (*Satya Shodhak Samaj*) Phule rebelled against the supremecy of Brahmins and stood against social evils like casteism untouchability, ban on widow remarriage and education of women, polygamy. Thus he emphasized education, social values of justice and equality He was the first to start a school for girls in 1840 and a school for untouchables in 1852. He was the first to start a worker's organization with Mr Lokhande in 1879, His approach was straight forward and his speeches were outspoken He was the first to collect funds to renovate the Samadhi of Shivaji Maharaj and wrote a ballad on Shivaji s life in 1865, Mention must also be made of Agarkar, Vishnubuva Brahmachari and theosophical movement, Lokamanya Tilak, Shahu Maharaj, Dr.B R Ambedkar, D. K. Karve, V. D. Savarkar, Gandhiji and others All these movements and the others unequivocally condemned untouchability. All stressed the social aspect of religion. Most of there stood for revitalization of vedic Hinduism. The efforts of all these forces brought about an awakening among the educated people of India and also gave a great impetus to the movement of Indias liberation and social revolution in Indian Society.

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ABHINAVAGUPTA : A STUDY

Moti Lal Pandit

Abhinavagupta appeared on the religio-philosophical scene of Kashmir at that time when Saivism as a distinctive religio-philosophical system had taken deep roots on the soil of Kashmir. Kashmir Saivism at the time of Abhinavagupta (11th century) had developed into various schools, such as, Trika school Spanda school, Pratyabhijna school. Krama school, and Kaula school. Although a sufficient degree of integration between these various schools of Kashmir Saivism had been achieved yet some important tasks had to be accomplished, and Abhinavagupta set out to bring harmony between the various viewpoints in his *magnum opus*, the *Tantraloka*. by giving correct interpretation of philosophical doctrines as propounded by Somananda and Utpala and by engaging himself in a comprehensive study of esoteric practices and rituals of Krama and Kaula Tantric systems. As far as the correct Interpretation of philosophical viewpoints is concerned, Abhinavagupta accomplsihed this task in his later life by writing commentaries on such works as the *Sivadrsti*, *Isvarpratyabhijna* and *Siddhi-trayi*. There was no text which could give an integrated interpretation of esoteric practices of Kashmir Saivism. As far as *astanga-yoga* was concerned, Patanjali had set down the basic principles in his *Yogasutras*. However, there was nothing comparable, in the context of Siva-yoga of Kashmir. to the *Yogasutras* of Pantajali 1. In order to fill this void Abhinavagupta wrote the *Tantraloka* with the purpose of presenting the Trika pratices in a systematic manner 2.

Whatever Abhinavagupta wrote or commented upon, it was constituted both by learning and experience. He studied the dualistic doctrines of Saivism (that is, of ths school of Amardaka)from Vamanatha, who was the son of Ekanatha 3. As far as the mono-duslistic school is concerned, he studied its doctrines from Bhattenduraja; and the monistic (*Pratyabhijna*) doctrines were imparted to him by Laksmangupta, who was the disciple of Utpaladeva 4. Sambhunatha, the great master of Tantric lore, taught him the practices of *Ardha tryambaka* school of Saivism, which Trayambakaditya started through the preceptorial line of his daughter 5. Among all teachers Abhinavagupta has expressed great veneration and praise to Sambhunatha 6.

It is traditionally accepted that the sources of the Trika Saivism of Kashmir are the sixty-four *Bhairava Agamas* and these Agamas have been listed in the *Srikanthi Samhita*, which Jayaratha quotes in his commentary on the *Tantraloka* 7 However, we possess only two *Bhairave Agamas* at present, namely, *Svacchanda* and *Rudrayamala*. The basic sources of Kashmir Saivism are said to be sixty four *Bhairava Agamas* eighteen *Rudra Agamas* and ten *Saiva Agamas*. As far as the study of the *Tantraloka* is concerned, Abhinavagupta has made use of three main Trika Agamas, and they are *Namaka Tantra, Siddha Tantra* and *Malini Tantra*. The last two Agamas have been sufficiently quoted in the *Tantraloka*. From the sixty-four *Bhairaya Agmas* various esoteric doctrines have been extracted such as, the process of meditation through six ways of space-time. This system of meditation is called *sadadhvan*. Another type of meditational technique(*Saktopaya*), which can be understood only by those who have made sufficient advance in this method, is called *Kalinaya* It is a meditational technique in which meditation is constituted by the twelve mysterious aspects of Kali In the Trika system Kali is conceived of in a different manner than that what is founh in the *Durga Saptasati*. Kali in the

Trika system is said to be the absolute-power of the absolute reality. and through this power (*Kali*) the Absolute performs the five cosmic activities of creation, preservation, absorption, obscuration and revelation 8. The doctrines and practices of *Kalinaya*, as discussed by Abhinavagupta in his *Tantraloka*, have been derived from the *Kramastotra* of certain Siddhanatha 9. This work, that is *Karmastotra*, is no more available. There are some more quotations of this work to be found in the commentary of Jayaratha on the *Tantraloka* In this sense the *Tantraloka* is a store-house of information, In the absence of the *Tantraloka* we would have been deprived of knowledge of some important doctrines and practices of Trika Saivism of Kashmir.

THE MAIN TOPIC IN THE TANTRALOKA

The main and essential features of Trika Saivism of Kashmir have been discussed in the first chapter of the *Tantraloka*, The discussion about the *Anaupyayoga* finds its place in the 2nd chapter. It is a type of yoga practice in which meditation is said to be spontaneous and which results in the realisation of the Self through the grace of some Siddha. These two topics constitute the first volume of the *Tantraloka*. In the third chapter analysis of the *Sambhavapaya*, along with the *Matrka* system, has been made and this forms the 2nd volume The fourth chapter, which forms the third volume. concentrates on the discussion of the *Saktopaya*, *Pratibimbavada* and the twelve *Kalis*. In the fifth chapter of this volume, that is, the third volume, analysis of superior kinds of *Anavopaya* is made. It begins its analysis with the Saivite *dhyana-yoga*, which is quite distinct and different from the *dhyana* of the *Yogasutras*. The *dhyana* is characterised by a kind of pictorial visualisation of ones potencies or powers in terms of cosmic activities of preservation, creation, absorption, etc. In this type of meditation he use of the *sakticakra* is prescribed, which also is referred to in *kalinaya* method of meditation. This meditational technique is also spoken of as the *buddhiyoga*. Next to *Anavopaya* comes *Pranayoga* of Trika system, which is different from the classical methed of *Pranayama*. This meditational method is popularly termed as the *Uccarayoga*, and is characterised by an orientation in which meditation is concentrated on the five functions of *Pranasakti*. and these five functions are *Prana, apana, samana, udana,* and *vyan*. There are six types of blissful experiences which result from the practice of this yoga, and they are *nijananda, nirananda, prananandu, brahmannapa, mahonahda* and *cidanonda*. The highest exprience which results from the practice of this meditation is termed as the *jagadananda*.

The next four volumes (that is, from volume iv to vii) constitute chapters from six to twelve. In these volumes the doctrines of six paths of space time are fully discussed. This method of space-time meditation is called the *sadadhvan*. All the meditational practices and techinques, with regard to the *sadadhvan*, are referred to as the *bahva-yoga*, that is, meditation on external objects. In the sixth chapter an analysis of the Trika doctrines is made in relation to the meditational technique of time. It is in this context that an esiteric doctrine of *mantras* is discussed. It is a precess in which the *mantras* are correlated with the movements of breath in relation to time. This process of meditation is called *cakrodaya*. In the eighth chapther, which comprises the fifth volume, Trika doctrine of cosmology is discussed. It also discusses the nature of Tantric deities who are supposed to be ruling over the various spheres or worlds(*bhuvanas*) in their subtler forms. In chapter nine, which forms the sixth volume, the problem of creation, the appearance of three types of impurities, nature and content of different types of impure beings, and theories relating to causation are discussed In the seventh volume the nature and category of beings their powers and practices, which are referred to as *vidyas*, have been dealt with. The eleventh chapter deals with the problem of *kalas* in relation to the path of space, whereas the twelth chapter concerns itself with the use of this path.

The volume seven, which consists of two chapters, engages itself with the discussion of divine grace in the light of Saiva-siddhanta and Trika system. Major kinds of *saktipata* or divine grace and their corresponding results hava been taken into account. The chapters fifteen to twenty-seven engage themselves in the discussion of rites and rituals, of philosophical significance of initiation (*diksa*). All these chapters are contained in the tenth volume. The eleventh volume consists of two chapters. The twenty-eighth chapter is devoted to the discussion of *naimittika* rites, whereas the twenty-ninth chapter discusses important practices of Kaulism such as, *rahasyacarya, duny vidhi*, etc,

The twelfth volume consists of chapters thirty to thirty-seven, In this volume various *mantras* and *mandalas* have been explained. Some practices, which seem to be of confidential nature. have been ambiguously explained, Also views of Trika Philosophy have been discussed, and it is maintained that the Trika system of thought is higher to all schools of Indian thought.

Jayaratha (12th century) has written a detailed commentary on the *Tantraloka*. This commentary is of immense help in understanding the *Karikas* of the *Tantraloka*. The commentary also is a store-house of quotations from the various Tantras which are no more available. Jayaratha's other commentary is on the *Vamakesvarimata*, a Tantric text of Kaula school.

THE NATURE OF BONDAGE

What is the cause of bondage ? It is ignorance in the metaphysical sense of the term. Ignorance simply does not signify a lack of knowledge. 10 The word *a-jnanam* is not to be interpret ed literally as *na-jnanam*. that is. lack or absence of knowledge. The word *ignorance* has to be understood as that in which knowledge is insufficient. In other words, *ajnana* means a knowledge whose nature and content is finite. It means that ignorance is constituted by finitude in that finite beings with their finite knowledge identify themselves with finite objects, such as, the physical body· the sense organs, This perspective results in a type of knowing and doing which is also finite. It is, in the context of finitude, finite self-consciousness which constitutes the finitude of knowledge, and thereby finitude, or rather finitude of consciousness. becomes the base of ignorance. The source for the bondage of the soul is to be traced in this ignorance, in which self-consciousness is identified with finitude.

Ignorance is said to be of two types, namely, *paurusa* and *bauddha*. 11 The *paurusa* kind of ignorance is said to be innate and is characterised by an orientation in which individuality is experienced within a limited horizon, and thereby the experience of eternity becomes an impossibility. It is a kind of ignorance which causes the sense of temporality in terms of space-time. 12 Therefore, the limited individuality. caused by the *paurusa* ignorance,obstructs the awareness of infinitude. The individuality becomes the source of the law of restriction and limitation (*niyati*). As far as the other type of ignorance (that is *bauddha* ignorance) is concerned, it expresses itself in terms of limitation in the conceptual knowledge. A finite being, while existing in a physical form, develops space-time bound conceptions about himself, his nature and capacities. This limited conceptual knowledge results in identifying the Self with this or that object. In other words, a person simply thinks of himself in terms of his limited ego. This limitation is developed at the level of intellect due to the finite conceptual knowledge. As this ignorance stems from the intellect, it is therefore spoken of as the *bauddha-ajnana*. This ignorance, in short, is characterised by the mental confusion in relation to one's true nature.

Both these types of ignorance are dependent on each other, 13 for the simple reason that the innate kind of ignorance helps in the development of the intellectual ignorance. Both of them, being closely knit to each other, entangle man's existence in the pain of *sumsara*. Freedom from the pain of *samusara* is possible and realisable only if both of them are destroyed Although the preceptor may destroy the innate kind of ignorance in the disciple, yet, according to the *Tantraloka*, mental confusion will continue its existence. 14 Therefore, it is recessary that a correct understanding about the nature of reality is more important before the innate ignorance is destroyed through the process of nitiation.

As far as knowledge is concerned, it is said to be of two kinds : *paurusa* and *bauddha*. The correct form of knowledge is said to be that which stems from intuition. Mere intellectual understanding is not correct knowledge (*bauddha-jnana*) 15. The other type of knowledge, that is, *paurusa* knowledge is characterised by a spontaneous intuition 16 This form of knowledge is experienced the moment individuality melts away. This form of knowledge results in the experience of the pure and infinite consciousness (*samvit*). The realisation and experience of the pure and absolute consciousness is said to lead to *jivanmukti* (that is, liberation in one's life-time) as well as to *videha-mukti* (that is, liberation after death) 1/.

According to the *Tantraloka*, liberation is said to be characterised by knowledge, whereas bondage by ignorance. 18 Trika school of Saivism believes that each individual is infinite, pure, absolute and perfect I-consciousness, but, due to ignorance, take limited entities (*purusatattvas*) as the basis for the Self. It is this finite understanding of the nature of Self which constitutes ignorance, and therefore becomes the cause of bondage.

The question before us now is : Why and how some aspirants develop a keen interest in the ways and means which lead to liberation, whereas others do not take any interest in such ways and means ? The Trika school believes that those who take interest in the means of liberation are led onto this road by the grace of Siva (*anugraha*), and grace is always gratuitous 19 It is the divine grace which directs and leads an aspirant on the road of liberation. 20 Both bondage and liberation are believed to be the two aspects of the same divine play of the Lord.. The Lord, while concealing his divine nature, appears in the form of a bound soul, and the recognition of the divinity of the soul results in liberation.

The nature and content of ignorance, which is said to be the source of bondage, has been conceived and interpreted differently by Indian thinkers. Broadly speaking, the classification can be made into two groups, namely, those who take ignorance as causeless and beginningless, and those who locate the cause of ignorance in the play of the Lord. According to the Nyaya-Vaisesaka school, the cause of ignorance is said to be characterised by the sixteen wrong elements of logical reasoning, whereas the Samkhya-Yoga think of ignorance as beginningless due to the mutual confusion (*aviveka*) between the individual consciousness (*purusa*) and the lifeless cosmic energy (*prakrti*). 21 The Advaita Vedanta of Samkara believes in the existence of an imaginary entity, which is spoken of as *maya* or *avidya*. The Buddhist thinkers have thought of ignorance as that in which consciousness flows momentarily. While consciousness flows like a stream of water, it (that is, consciousness) appears as an ego in different individuals, which is infested by the past impressions and attachments, In this manner consciousness, as a momentary flow, moves from birth to birth, with the past impressions, in a miserable condition Such impressions, flowing from eternity, are called *vasanas*, and these impressions are said to be the main constituents of ignorance. As far as Kashmir Saivism is concerned. it believes that the cause of ignorance is the Lord himself. It believes that the Absolute appears itself in material and mental forms 22 The external and individual manifestation of the Lord constitute his cosmic activity of creation preservation, absorption, obscuration and revelation, 23 The Lord, while concealing his divine nature, appears as a bound soul limited by the innate ignorance, 24 The individual as a separate entity with an innate ignorance may be said to be the creation of the Lord.

THE NATURE OF LIBERATION

The content of bondage, according to Abhinavagupta is comprised by incorrect conceptions about the identity of one's real nature. Liberation from this bondage results the moment correct conceptions about the nature of one's reality are formed. 25 The formation of correct ideas about the nature of one's self is made possible through the process of Siva-yoga. The practice of Siva-yoga leads to the state of *pratyabhijna,* that is, to a state in which real nature of the Self is recognised. In this state of *pratyabhijna* it is realised that the Self is non-different from the Absolute and that the outward world is nothing but the manifestation of the Self. 26 Moreover. in this state limitless consciousness and divine powers are realised. An aspirant who has reached this state is referred to as *jivanmukta,* 27 that is, a *jivanmukta* is the one who is still living in the world. A *jivanmukta* lives in the phenomenal world so long as his *prarabdha-karma* does not exhaust itself At the end of his worldly existence he achieves complete identity with the Absolute, and thereby enjoys all the divine bounties. This total identification with the Absolute is called the *videha mukti.* 28 The *jivanmukta,* while living in the world, does not actually experience the divine omnipotence and omniscience 29. Due to his physical body, he has to act within the limitations of his body.

There is, however, a higher state of *jivanmukti,* which is called *samavesa*, It is a state of experience in which an aspirant has an unexpected experience of identity with the Absolute. It is an experience in which consciousness is seized by the Absolute. While being conscious of his individuality, the aspirant experiences as if his individual consciousness is being transmuted into the Absolute 30. This experience makes the aspirant re-cognise that he is none other than the Absolute. In this state all supernatural powers (*siddhis*) are realised, At the end of his earthly existence, two courses of action are open to a *jivanmukta* , he either gets completely absorbed in the Absolute or he takes a divine form like that of a Bhairava, If he takes, divine form, the *jivanmukti* helps the Lord in conducting the play of bondage and liberation in relation to beings of the world After the completion of the divine form, the *jivanmukta* is absorbed within the absolute consciousness.

Besides the *jivanmukti* type of liberation there is another form of liberation, which is called the *krama-mukti* that is, liberation by stages It is a type of liberation in which the Lord bestows some grace on the aspirant, but this grace does not lead to liberation, While practising the Siva-yoga, the aspirant does not develop such possibilities which would enable him to loosen the grip of impurities. However, after death he reaches to some kind of divine abode. In the abode in which he resides after death, the deity of that abode helps the aspirant in the elimination of impurities. The aspirant, step by step, moves to different higher divine abodes, and ultimately he becomes one with the Absolute. 31

THE NATURE OF THE ULTIMATE REALITY

Most of the schools of Indian philosophy, who adhere in one form or the other, to the Vedic religion, conceive of reality pluralistically, in that they accept more than one entity to be real. The Nyaya-Vaisesaka school maintains an existence of several elements, such as, atoms. souls, minds, time, space, God, etc. The Mimamsa school agrees with the Nyaya on many points The Samkhya-Yoga accepts the eternal existence of *prakriti* and *purusa*. *Prakriti* is said to be the insentient root element, the cosmic energy, which serves as the source of all physical and mental entities, whereas *purusa*, the sentient element or soul. is said to be countless in number. Vaisnavism and Saivism of the South are also pluralistic in orientation, in that they firmly believe in the eternal existence of God, soul and matter.

Buddhism as a non-vedic religion does not at all encourage any kind of search for some kind of metaphysical reality, and no school of Buddhism believes in the reality of any primordial or eternal element or elements. The phenomenal existence is said to be characterised by momentary groups of mental or material attributes All these attributes are merely momentary appearances flowing due to the beginningless flow of ignorance, There is no permanent substratum in the universe or outside the universe. Every entity is generated in a moment and, while generating another entity, passes away itself in a moment. This process goes on endlessly. Nothing endures beyond the third moment. The Mahayana school of Buddhism believes in the existence of the flow of momentary intelligence, which manifests itself in terms of mental states and physical entities on account of the past impressions. The Hinyana school accepts the flow of two kinds ; (i) mind and mental states and (ii) matter and material entities. However, both these types of flows are of momentary nature. No school of Buddhism, no matter what the predisposition may be, believes in any eternal metaphysical reality beyond the constant flow of mind and matter. As far as Vajrayana school of Tibet is concerned, it does not differ from other, schools of Buddhism in regard to the ultimate reality.

Although the Vaisnavite philosophy of Vallabha professes to be monistic, yet, on investigation, the claim does not stand the test. However, the school comes near to the qualified monism of Ramanuja. As far as the Veersaiva school is concerned, it is difficult to comprehend the nature of *samrasya*, that is Veersaiva philosophy is not clear about the relation of the liberated soul with Siva. However, the *Samrasya* concept is very near to monistic framework. The *samrasya* is a concept which explains union and not unity. The Advaita of Sankara, although monistic, is not sufficiently theistic, in that it bends towards sunyavada of Buddhism32

The metaphysical reality, which serves as the substratum for the manifestation of all phenomena, is, according to Kashmir Saivism, beyond the reach of mind and intellect. It can neither be conceived nor explained or expressed. Whatever is expressed or explained about the ultimate reality, is only in terms of approximations. The ultimate reality is neither Siva, nor Sakti nor any other entity that may be conceived 33. Whatever may be said about the ultimate reality, it is not the real or actual truth and the reality 34 because of the fact that whatever intellect conceives or thinks about the infinite reality, it is all in terms of space-time limitations. The Absolute, being beyond the space-time continuum, cannot be conceived of by the intellect for the simple reason that the intellect itself is the child of space-time, 35 It is this Reality, which is transcendent, which is said to be the source of all that which is in the universe. Although indefinable, the Absolute has been defined as that which is infinite, eternal, omniscient, omnipotent and Pure I-consciousness. Being the source of everything, It is everything, and therefore It shines as everything and in everything Although the Absolute is everything and in everything, yet It transcends everything.

The essential nature of the Absolute is Its godhead, that is, the Absolute is God due to its very nature. In this sense the absolute monism of Kashmir Saivism is simultaneously theistic in orientation. Therefore, the philosophy of

Kashmir Saivism may be said to be theistic absolutism.

As far as the ontological explanation of the ultimate reality is concerned, Kashmir Saivism adopts the following approach, The real existence of everything, both of pure and mundane existence, is said to be Siva, who is the absolute God 36. Siva, as the absolute God, is pure and self-luminous *prakasa*, that is, spiritual light of consciousness. *Prakasa*, being the luminous light of consciousness, is self-evident in everything and everywhere due to its very nature. 37 Its existence is not to be known by employing the means of knowledge. *Prakasa* is self-evident precisely because every conscious being is conscious of himself; and to be conscious of oneself is due to *prakasa*, Whatever there is, it is because of *prakasa*. *Prakasa* in itself is luminous, and thereby makes everything luminous. In other words, it means that the existence of everything depends on *prakasa* 38 To shine and to make everything shine, even at the mundane level, is the nature of *prakasa*. 39 Since everything shines in and through *prakasa*, it is but *Prakasa* which shines in all apparent existences. 40 This kind of monism is spoken of as the *Pratyaksadvaita*, that is, monism which can be perceived through the senses. 41 *Prakasa*, as one of the aspects of the Absolute. is infinite, independent. eternal, and therefore space-time cannot limit It 42

The other aspect of the Absolute is that which is engaged in a continuous manifestation of It self in the phenomena in different forms and shapes. In this aspect the Absolute appears Itself to be the phenomena. Whatever there is in the universe, it is the manifestation of the Absolute. Those who are perfect Siva-yogins realise and perceive that everything in the universe, is nothing but Siva himself. 43 They see Siva not only in the universe, but beyond the phenomena, The school of Kashmir Saivism does not like that of the Advaita Vedanta, apply any kind of *laksana* (i. e, indicative power of speech) to the scriptural statements like *tattvam asi* (That thou art). The Absolute in the Saiva monism of Kashmir shines both as the cosmos and, being the Absolute, beyond the cosmos. The Absolute, therefore, is both transcendent and immanent. The Absolute, when conceived of as God, is endowed with the absolute powers. Abhinavagupta, while differentiating the Absolute of Saiva monism from the Advaita Vedanta, coins new words to express the meaning of the Absolute in Kashmir Saivism. He uses words like *paramadvaita, paramdvaya, paradvaita*, etc, 44

It has been further stated in the *Tantraloka* that the Absolute" while appearing in the form of phenomena, appears also in the waking, dreaming and sleeping states. 45 *Prakasa,* it is maintained, is such an aspect of the Absolute which both pervades and transcends the universe, The basic cause of the universe has been located in *prakasa*. It is further maintained that *prakasa* continuously shines and playfully manifests the whole show of the universe. 46 The whole universe is the manifestation of *prakasa* by virtue of Its playfullness which is its basic nature. 47 *Prakasa,* in the process of manifestation, does not suffer from any change or modification precisely because manifestation takes place in the same manner as a reflection happens in a mirror. 48

The changelessness of the Absolute shines eternally due to its *prakasa*; and *prakasa* is the static aspect of the Absolute, Since the essence of *prakasa* is *vimarsa,* that is, spiritual stir of consciousness, the Absolute shines as God through the five cosmic powers of creation, preservation absorption obscuration and revelation. This aspect of the Absolute, that is, the *vimarsa* aspect, is the dynamic aspect of the Absolute as God. The Absolute in Its static aspect (that is *prakasa* aspect) is referred to as Siva, and Sakti in Its dynamic aspect. Both these aspects form a single unity within the Absolute without any internal division (*savagatalheda*). *Prakasa* is the infinite light of the Absolute

Consciousness, whereas *vimarsa* is the creative activity of pure consciousness as *prakasa*. Both these aspects form a single unity, and are spoken of as *samvit* (absolute consciousness). *prakasa* and *vimarsa* as Siva and Sakti, are two aspects of the infinite *samvit* or *Paramsiva*. *Prakasa* is the *jnana* (knowledge) aspect of the Absolute, whereas *vimarsa* is the creative and dynamic aspect of the Absolute.49

The Absolute in Kashmir Saivism, being independent and sportive as God, plays the drama of creation, preservation, absorption, obscuration and revelation. 50 The Absolute, while performing these cosmic activities, is not dependent on something else other than Itself. Whatever appears in the universe exists always in the Absolute as *samvit*. 51 Everything exists in the Absolute as an integral "I" This "I" is not ego; rather the "I" is the absolute consciousness of the Absolute, This "I" is, therefore, spoken of as perfect (*paripurana*) in itself.

The universe, while existing as the pure "I" in the Absolute, is manifested by the Absolute as 'this", In this way the Absolute appears as many entities with limited powers of knowledge and action. It is the divine play or creative activity of the Absolute in relation to creation. In this manner creation is kept on moving for ages, and this aspect of preservation is carried by Visnu as the agent of the Absolute in accordance with the law of *karma*. At the end of the creational period the Absolute absorbs the creation into his subjectivity, and this activity of the Absolute is called the activity of absorption, The Absolute pushes the souls into the abyss of ignorance in the process of playing the role of obscuration. By obscuring Itself. the Absolute obscures the divine potency of countless souls. When the Absolute showers grace on some people, it is called the revelatory activity. These five cosmic activities of the Absolute constitute the essential nature of the godhead, 52

THE NATURE OF CREATION

There is a close relationship, in Indian philosophy, between cosmology and ontology. All cosmological theories have been worked out in accordance with ontological viewpoints. There are four main theories which have been developed by various thinkers One of the theories is that creation is composed of elements, which are subtle in texture and exist eternally; and these elements are said to be atoms (*anu*). The formation of these elements into a creational pattern is directed by God. This theory is spoken of as the *arambhavada*, that is, the theory of origination, This theory has been worked out and developed by the followers of Nyaya-Vaisesika schools.

Another theory of creation is that of transformation or modification. This theory had been originally worked out by the authors of Samkhya-Yoga schools. The theory holds the view that the various component elements of the universe are nothing but different modifications of the fundamental elements, which is spoken of as the *mula prakriti* or *pradhana-tattva*. The equilibrium within this fundamental element is maintained by three qualities or *gunas*, and these qualities or *gunas* are *sttava*, *rajas* and *tamas*. And whenever there is disturbance within this equilibrium, the *mula-prakriti*, through modification and transformation, evolves itself into different entities, which compose the universe. All these different components of the universe are said to be the mixture of these qualities or *gunas*. As far as *mula-prakriti* is concerned, it is maintained that *it*, that is, the *mula-prakriti*, is eternal and contains everything within *itself* that appears in the universe The component elements of the universe do not owe their existence to a fresh creation; rather they are mere manifestation of the *mula-prakriti*. All the elements, at the time of dissolution, are absorbed into the *mula-prakriti* through the reverse process of transformation. The later Samkhya maintained that *prakriti*, although unconscious in its basic nature, undergoes a type reaction through the presence of suffering, and which results in *its* transformation into the objective elements of the universe, This theory is called *parinamavada*.

The Kashmir school of Saivism agrees with the Samkhya. but considers the *mula-prakriti* and *purusa* (finite being) as creations. It tries to explore the basic origin of creation. Creation is brought into being out of *prakriti* by *Srikanthanatha*. Srikanthnatha is said to be an incarnation Isvara, He is one of the five agents (*karanas*) of Paramasiva Even the incarnation of Srikanthanatha is said to be determined by the law of *niyati*, that is, by the law of *karma*.

There is another theory of creation, which is termed as the *vivarta-vada*, that is, it is a theory of appearance advocated by the Buddhists and the Advaitins. Both these schools maintain that the universe actually does not exist, it appears to be existing, As the universe never exists it never has come into existence. What we take to be as universe is; in reality, an appearance, a dream. The cause for this appearance is said to be the beginningless ignorance. The most popular forms of this viewpoint are the *virvarta-vada*, *vijnana vada* and *sunya-vada*. All these forms of this theory have been popularised by the schools of Advaita Vedanta, Yogacara and Madhyamikas respectively. These theories have neither been accepted by the Saivites nor by the Vaisnavites Abhinavagupta criticises all forms of this theory on the basis of its orientation towards nihilism 54

As far as the Pasupatas, Saivasiddhantins and Gorakhnathis are concerned, they have a theistic theory of creation, which advocates that Siva brings about modification in *prakriti* for the sake of suffering humanity. Siva does it in accordance with the law of *karma*. In some of these schools *Prakriti* has been taken as the material cause of the universe.

It has been maintained that *prakriti* has its own independent existence. But in some other schools *prakriti* has been considered as *sakti* or power of Siva. Siva, while making the component elements (*tattvas*) of the universe from *parkriti*, takes into consideration the law of *karma*. and accordingly creates the bonded souls.

The authors of Kashmir Saivism have developed an independent theory of creation, and the theory is called *svatantryasiddhanta*, that is, it is a theory in which the sovereignity of will of the Absolute is said to be the cause of the universe. The theory maintains that God creates the phenomena out of himself through his sportive will. Playfullness is the essential nature of God. God, while creating the *tattvas* (elements) out of himself, does not depend for this activity on anything else other than himself. Every component of the universe is contained within God in the form of potency. It is within *him* that everything exists as his very own self, that is, an eternal and infinite 'I' This "I" as consciousness vibrates both within and without *him* This supreme consciousness of the Absolute is not motionless or inactive like space. Consciousness is considered to be a stir or vibration in itself, Due to this stir (*spanda*) of consciousness God appears as (i) Siva that is, the Absolute. (ii) Sakti, the absolute godhead, (iii) Sadasiva, God in the relative form when absorbed in the playfullness of variety, (iv) Isvara, that is God when absorbed in divine functions of godhead, and (v) Suddhavidya or Sadvidya, that is, the revelatory aspect of the Absolute In these forms of appearances the Absolute reveals himself in terms of correct knowledge, These five appearances of the Absolute are said to be the basic manifestations. These manifestations of the Absolute are accomplished through the sovereignity of will. These five forms of manifestations of God are pure, in that every manifestation shines as identical with the infinite I consciousness. As far as the gross creation, or rather manifestation is concerned, it obscures the real nature of I-consciousness. The gross or impure creation is said to begin from Maya whose nature it is to veil and cover the real nature of I-consciousness. Siva, while manifesting his Self in different forms, appears as a limited sentient being, on the one hand and, on the other hand, appears through his will, in diverse forms, as insentient elements called *maya-tattva,* 55 who serve as insentient substances for the creation of inanimate elements. The sentient element, which is covered by the veil of Maya, is reduced to finitude, and therefore is called *anu* (atom) or *pasu* (finite bonded subject). As a limited being, the *pasu* takes the finite I-consciousness to be the self. Having limited his I-consciousness, he takes himself to be different from others, and thereby forgets the fact that he is identical with the Absolute, and that nothing is different from him. This type of creation, caused by Maya, is brought about by Isvara. Isvara is said to be God in relation to the universe. 56

Kashmir Saivism has discarded the theory of transformation in so far as its basic cosmology is concerned, It has instead resorted to the theory of reflection (*pratibimbavada*). The universe, in the context of this theory, is neither the transformation of God nor of Sakti: it is the pure *prakasa* of God and it appears so in the manner of a reflection in the mirror. The manifestation of God as the universe does not mean that God is transformed into the universe. God s manifestation as the universe does in no manner alter his eternal *prakasa* 57 By virtue of the light of *parkasa* God illumines the whole phenomena. All the phenomenal elements exist in the Absolute in their potential forms. They shine in the Absolute as consciousness, and it is their *paamartha-satta* or the absolute reality. 58 Their phenomenal appearance, shining in the manner of a reflection, has both rise and fall within the pure consciousness. Therefore, the phenomenal elements have a transitory existence As they are appearances, they come within the sphere of *abhasa,* that is, the *tattvas* (elements) are of the nature of psychic light (*abhasa*) which shine in the lustre of *Prakasa* 59.

THE NATURE OF SPANDA

The principle of *spanda* (that is, vibration) was, for the first time, enunciated by Vasugupta in his *Sivasutra*. This concept was further developed by Bhatta Kallata in his *Spanda-karika* and *Spanda-sarvasva*, and was later further elucidated and commented by Ramakantha and Bhatta Bhasakara, It was accepted as a basic tenet of Kashmir Saivism both by Somananda and Utpala, and Abhinavagupta applied the concept both to theory and practice.

The basic idea of this concept is that reality is vibration. In some of the Saivite works Advaita Vedantins have been referred to as *santa-brahma-vadins*. Brahman of the Advaita Vedanta is tranquil (*santa*), in It there is no stir of any kind. But Kashmir Saivism does not accept such a conceptual understanding of Reality, It believes that the Absolute has within Itself a subtle stir or movement, and due to which sentient beings are moved to know and to act, This stir within the pure consciousness is called *spanda*

Spanda within the pure consciousness carries with itself many types of psycho-physical movements and activities of finite beings. These various movements and activities of the finite beings are not movements of the pure consciousness precisely because pure *spanda* is of blissful nature, It may be realised in the fourth state of consciousness, namely, the state of *turiya*. It is a state of spiritual revelation. There is still a higher state of spiritual illumination, which is called *turyatita*, that is, the absolute transcendental state of pure consciousness.

The term *spanda* is derived from the root *spandi*, meaning " to move a little " (*kimcit-calana*). Abhinavagupta, while explaining this word in his commentary on the *Paratrimsika*, explains the word as a spontaneous spiritual activity of pure consciousness which is realisable through the practice of Siva-yoga. 60 *Spanda* is said to be shining always as pure consciousness.

Paramasiva, the Absolute in Kashmir Saivism, is said to be Siva precisely because of his being God. The Absolute is Sakti on account of his being the embodiment of godhead. One of the most essential aspects of Sakti is *spanda*, which. having costant rise and fall, is the basic cause of all creations and dissolutions of countless universes. In the Agamic literature the concept of *spanda* has been explained in various ways. It has been described as *sphurtta* (twinkling ' *ghurni* (dizziness), *urmi* (wave), *matsyodari* (to throb like a fish when out of water).

THE CATEGORY OF ELEMENTS AND BEINGS

The whole existence, right from the Absolute Reality to the gross world, has been divided into thirty-six *tattvas*. All the thirty-six *tattvas* have been reduced to five *kalas* Each *kala* has a certain number of *tattvas* Each *kala* is supposed to possess certain *bhuvanas* or worlds of different kinds of beings. The total number of the main worlds has been accepted to be one hundred eighteen. Each *bhuvana* is presided over by a deity called either Rudra or a *bhuvanesvara*. Many kinds of beings, who reside in these various *bhuvanas*, have been broadly classified into seven categories. The process of creation and dissolution of *bhuvanas*, of *tattvas*, of *kalas*, of beings and of *bheuanesvaras* have fully been discussed in the *Tantraloka*.

In Kashmir Saivism it has been maintained that the creation and dissolution of 118 *bhuvanas*, the whole show of activities in these *bhuvanas*, the process of bondage and liberation of beings in these *bhuvanas*, are, in the light of Kashmir Tantrism directed and controlled by God through his manifold powers. Some such powers have been delegated to Bhairavas or male deities, while most of the powers are said to have been delegated to Saktis or female deities Each deity is believed to be the embodiment of some divine power, and the number of these deities is countless.

The phenomenal existence is said to be going through the different stages of evolution, and each stage of evolution is categorised into different *tattvas* or elements A *tattva* is the essence of several akin entities which bind them together into a single element. 61 Besides, a *tattva* does not even get dissolved at the time of dissolution. *Tattvas* are the basic elements to which etnities are reduced at the time of their dissolution, and out of which they emerge at the time of manifestation.

Paramasiva, having everything within himself and being the of essence everything, is, in reality, the only *tattva*. 62 Paramasiva appears in the form of Siva, Sakti and Nara' and this forms the three-*tattva* doctrine. The whole of existence at the same time has been classified into the three states of *abheda* (unity), *bhedabheda* (unity-in-diversity) and *bheda* (diversity). Entities in these states of existence are spoken of as *Siva-tattva*, *Vidya-tattva* and *Maya-tattva*. This is another type of three-*tattva* doctrine. Since the *tattvadhyan*, that is, the path of objective meditation, recognises thirty-six *tattvas*, it is this number of *tattvas* which has been accepted in Kashmir Saivism It has further been accepted that these *tattvas* have their creation and dissolution in the Absolute, which, as pure *prakasa* pervades them all, and therefore the number of *tattvas* is counted as thirty-seven.

All these elements. as they belong to the objective realm of thought, are referred to as the *prameya-tattvas*, or objective elements meant for intellectual reflection. Five *tattvas*, from Siva to Suddhavidya. are said to be pure *tattvas* precisely because the beings of these *tattvas* are not oblivious of their divine potency and purity. They do not take any insentient element as their self and are aware of their identity with the absolute I-consciousness.

Philosophically speaking, the absolute reality is spoken of as Paramasiva, who is explained in his two aspects, namely, static and dynamic The dynamic aspect of the Absolute is constituted by the manifestation of his five divine cosmic powers. Although Paramasiva manifests himself through the divine dynamism, he remains unchanged within himself The changeless aspect of Paramasiva is his static dimension When thought of in terms of his static aspect, Paramasiva appears as Siva. and when conceived in his dynamic aspect, he appears in the form of Sakti. 63

Spanda has already been explained as that which is of the nature of movement or stir within Siva, The initial movement within Siva is directed towards the evolution of the phenomenal existence. which results in the manifestation of next two *tattvas*, namely, of Sadasiva or Sadakhya tattva and Isvara-tattva, At this stage the *spanda*, as an inward movement, shines as Sadasiva-tattva, and outward movement as Isvara-tattva. 64 The whole phenomenal existence is within Siva and shines at the infinite I-consciousness. The *spanda*, when in its outward form, shines as " this " of the I-consciousness. Consciousness at this stage shines as *aham idam* (I am this), or *idam aham* (this is myself) 65. When the phenomena shines in Siva as I-consciousness, it is the subjective manifestation of Siva. These two stages of subject and object appear as a single unit, and therefore are spoken of as *paraparadosa*, 66 that is, an intermediary stage. When there is the appearance of subject and object, it involves unity-in-diversity, that is, *bhedabheda*. When two beings experience unity-in diversity, their viewpoint is taken to be the fifth *tattva*, and is called Suddhavidya or Sadvidya. 67

There are impure *tattvas*. The *mayatattva*, which is the creation of Isvara, is of impure nature. 68 The creative will of Isvara appears itself in the form of *mayatattva.* 69 The *mayatattva* hides the pure and essential nature of Isvara 70 and thereby appears in the form of a finite being (*anu*) Besides Maya serves as the basic impure substance out of which are created the phenomenal elements. 71 The finite subject, being limited, searches for that which is unlimited. Being covered by the veil of Maya, the finite subject is not in a position to enjoy the bliss of his own essential nature. This non-enjoyment of one s nature results in restlessness (*lolika*), 72 Anantanatha, an incarnation of Isvara. takes pity on the restless souls, and consequently enables them to have objective enjoyment by shaking up Maya. In this manner Maya is expanded into five limiting elements. which limit the person's capacity of knowledge and action. These limiting elements are called *kancukas* or covers. The first *kancuka* is *kala.* It limits the scope of subjecthood, and thereby deprives the person of his omnipotence. The second *kancuka* is called *asudha-vidya,* and it deprives the soul of its omniscience. *Raga,* or the limited interest, is the third *kancuka,* its function is to limit the scope of *kala* and *vidya* further by diverting the soul from the pursuit of spiritual knowledge. The fourth *knacuka* is called *niyati,* that is, the law of restriction The law's of nature depriva the subject of independence, and thereby the scope for knowledge and action becomes restricted. 73 Finally, we have the *kalatattva,* or the *tattva* of time. This *kancuka* deprives the subject of his real nature, and thereby reduces him to finitude. These five limiting veils, along with Maya, are known as six *kancukas.* and they function as the limiting forces in relation to the self. 74

The subject, when limited in scope by the *kancukas,* is called *purusa.* The undifferentiated objective existence of *purusa* is referred to as *prakriti,* Both *purusa* and *prakriti* enjoy each other, as both of them are dependent on each other, as both of them are dependent on each other. It is *kala*. while appearing in the form of four *kancukas*, gives birth both to *purusa* and *prakriti* 75. As *prakriti* itself appears in the form of pain, pleasure and ignorance (*rajas*, *sattva* and *tamas*), *prakriti* is taken to be the equilibrium of these three *gunas* or qualities, and therefore is spoken of as *guna-samya*. Anantanatha, an incarnation of Isvara, creates both the enjoyable and non-enjoyable elements which are characterised by three *gunas*. In this way the infinite illuminating power (*jnanasakti*) of Siva is reduced to the status of *sattva-guna*, which consists of limited sense and psychic pleasure. Siva's infinite power of action (*kriyasakti*) appears in *purusa* in the form of *rajoguna*, which is characterised by pain. Siva's power to manifest himself in manifold forms (*maya-sakti*) is reduced to the level of *tamoguna*, which is characterised by ignorance. 76

God is Isvara when engaged in five cosmic activities of creation, preservation, etc. When Isvara, in the form of Srikanthanatha descends to the abode of *prakriti tattva*, he shakes up the equilibrium within *prakriti*, and thereby creates twenty-three instrumental and objective elements out of it. 77 These elements are provided with cloaks, and thereby they become the enjoyers of sense-objects. These souls in the process of enjoyment take the objects of enjoyment as separate from themselves. It is Srikanthanatha who brings about the *prakriti-tattva* and directs it towards particular types of transformation into phenomenal entities.

The first result of the direction to *prakriti* by Srikanthanatha is the stir within *prakriti*. This stir leads to the disturbance in the equilibrium of *gunas* within *prakriti*. This stir within *prakriti* is counted as one more *tattva* between *prakriti* and *buddhi*, and is called *gunatattva*. The *gunatattva* is characterised by disturbance (*ksobha*). The first element of creation brought about by Srikanthanatha is *buddhi* (intelligence). It is the most important interior sense organ, and is counted to be the first elemental transformation of *prakritii* It is also referred to as the *mahat-tattva*. The sense of *buddhi* is transformed into *ahamakara* (that is, the individual ego) which is characterised by the concept of I-ness in relation to the finite entities. The individual ego is transformed into sixteen elements, and they are the mind, five sense organs, five organs of action, and five subtle objective elements of sound, touch, colour, taste and smell, each of which is called a *tanmatra*.

THE TYPES OF IMPURITIES

God appears in the form of different types of impure beings. Though ever pure in his basic nature, he appears as if he is impure. By virtue of his own godhead he, while conccaling his nature of absolute purity, manifests through himself a complex variety of impurities. It is the process of materialisation of his free will to conceal his real nature which appears as *mala* (impurity). 78

Three names have been given to impurity at the three stages of its growth. At its initial stage an impurity is called *anava*. *Anu* means an atom or an etity of atomic dimension, Here the word means an exrreme type of finiteness. and *anu* is the name given to a finite being, *Anava-mala* is, therefore, an impurity of finiteness manifested by God through his own self as a finite soul, A being, who is under the influence of *anava-mala*, forgets his infinitude and pure consciousness, 79 The infinite consciousness is pure *samvit*, Whereas the finite consciousness, termed as *sunya*, is said to be impure, although consciousness is essentially pure. The finite consciousness shines in such a manner as if it is devoid of every, thing except itself. It is for this reason that the individual consciousness is called *sunya* (empty) 80 The finite being under the influence of *anava-mala*, takes *sunya* as his self. However, there are beings, though under the influence of *anava-mala*, do not forget the nature of their consciousness but are unaware of their divine potency, 81

Everything in esseece is believed to be God. In fact, it is said that God is everything himself. His unity becomes clear at the stage of pure *vidya*. But at the impure stage of *maya* God appears to be different from everything. Difference between the finite subjects, between the subject and object, between different objects, and between God and the world appears at the stage of *mayiya-mala*. The *mayiya-mala* either manifests itself together with the *anava mala* or separately. 82 The *anava-mala* is generally the base on which the structure of *mayiya-mala* is built.

The final growth of impurity is the stage of *karma-mala*. This *mala* is the most dense and dark It is the impurity of the past deeds which compells the bonded souls to undergo transmigration.

All the living beings, whether living in pure or impure abodes, have, broadly speaking, been divided into seven primary categories. The lowest category is that of *sakala* beings who exist under the influence of all three *malas*, that is, impurities. In this category come the most impure beings who are bound to the chain of transmigration. 83 The beings, who are higher than the *sakala* beings, are known as *pralaya-kalas*. These beings belong to the sleeping state. These beings are free from the effects of *kalatattva*, as they are not involved in such evolutes as *kancukas*, *tanmatras*, etc. Therefore, they are spoken of as *akalas*. But their *akala*-hood is neither the result of their purity nor the fruit of their final freedom from *kala*. Their freedom from *kala* is of temporary nature, The souls at the time of dissolution lose their bodily organs, and thereby are transformed into *pralayakalas*. They get freedom from *kala*, which is of temporary nature, due to dissolution (*pralaya*) of *kala*, and its evolutes. 84 At the time of fresh creation these beings get enmeshed in their bodily existence, and thereby restart their cycle of birth and death 85, Higher to the *pralaya-kala* state is that of the *vijnanakala* In this state beings achieve freedom from *kala* with the aid of knowledge(*vijnana*).

This state of tranquility is achieved by those who are devoted to the *ojatavada* of the Advaita Vedanta. The living beings of the *vijnanakala* have the experience of identity with the infinite *prakasa,* and thereby they rise above the state of *sunya* (void) and are on the threshold of pure consciousness. But they identify themselves only with the *prkása* aspect of Reality, and therefore are not aware of the divine potency 86 Higher to the *vijnanakala* state is the state of *mantras,* it is also called *vidyesvaras.* that is, the masters of knowledge. The knowledge of the beings in this state is characterised by mental clarity in which they have direct experience of their identity with the pure *samvit* and the realisation of their divine potency. However, they perceive the objective existence as something different from themselves and speak of it in terms of '' this" rather than ' I". In this manner the beings in this state are involved in *mayiya-mala.* 87 Two types of higher and pure beings have their place in the higher planes of pure *vidya.* These beings are called *mantresvara* and *mantramohesvaras.* These beings live in the state in which they perceive unity-in-diversity, and thereby perceive the objective world as their body 88 These beings occupy an intermediary state in the Turiya state. In these beings no impurity is to be found. However, the seeds of *anava-mala* are to be found in them. The *akala* beings alone occupy the fourth state in Turiya. They alone are absolutely free from *kala.* An *akala* being shines as a perfect and independent subject. The whole objective existence of this-ness lies within the I-ness of an *akala* being.

Analysis of the functions of animation in different living beings have been correlated with the analysis of beings into seven categories. *Prana* is the name given to the power of animation. It is this power which differentiates a living being from an insentient entity. All the beings, from *sakala akala,* function through the power of *prana.* The power of animation works in several ways in different states of animation, for example, the waking state, dreaming state, sleeping state, etc. In like manner it functions differently among different beings, such as *sakala pralayakala*, *vijnanakala*, etc. The functions of *prana*, broadly speaking have been divided into five categories, namely, *prana*, *apana*, *samana*, *udana* and *vyana*. *Prana* and *apana* are the two aspects of the life-force, which are to be found in all types of *sakala* beings. 89. Dissolution of *prana* and *apana*, that is, of elimination and assimilation, into one state of self-awareness is one more function. The pure I-ness, freed from assimilition and elimination, shines as the I-ness It usually shines in the sleeping state. This dissolution of *prana* and *apana* into one state is called *samana* and it takes place in the state of *susapti*. 90 The *susapti* state is a state of rest, and it augments the energy of animation. 91 This state is to be found in the dreamless state, and shines among the beings of *Pralayakala*. 92 The fourth *prana* is *udana*. Sivayogins have a clear realisation of its nature. In the process of this type of animation all kinds of thought-processes begin to disappear, Mind gives up its activity of reflection and the intellect stops its conceptualisation The I-ness, shorn of the I, shines in its effulgence. The *udana* state of animation shines as *turiya*. It shines among the beings of *vijnanakalas*, and its brilliance increases among the beings of *mantras*, *mantresvaras* and *mantramahesvaras*. In this state the Sivayogins feel a fiery sensation rising upwards through the spinal cord (*susumna*) towards the top of the head. 93 The experience of the ultimate unity is the function of *vyana* It shines in the state of *samvesa*, which can be realised through the practice of Sivayoga. It shines mainly in the absolute God. Paramasiva, who shines at the transcendental level, that is, *turyatita*. 94 This state is the state of the absolute; perfect and divine consciousness. *Vyana* functions in Siva Sakti and among the akala beings.

THE CONCEPT OF DIVINE GRACE

The final cosmic activity of God is that of revelation that is, of grace, The grace of God gives a start to the efforts, of a being towards liberation. According to the Kashmir Saivism, the grace of God is the main cause which creates a spontaneous tendency in the mind of a bonded soul towards liberation. Grace, therefore, is the basic cause of liberation. 95 The process is called as *saktipata*

God bestows grace on all living beings without any distinction. But the impurities of beings are different in dimension and intensity, Some beings are completely overwhelmed by the gross impurities, while others have already thinned the intensity of impurities by means of religious practices of *homa, puja, japa,* etc. The impurities of most of the beings are not generally ripe for eradication, The gradual ripening of impurities for eradication is called the *malapaka. Saktipata* is not the result of meritorious actions. 96 The result of deeds of a being have been classified into three types : (i) *jati* or birth of a being in some specific abode (loka) and species, (ii) *ayus* or span of life to be lived, and (iii) *bhoga* or quantity and quality of enjoyment. Liberation and *saktipata* cannot be seen in any of these categories,

The Kashmir Saivism establishes the playful free will of God as the only cause for grace. God bestows his grace on a soul in accordance with the divine freewill, which is the essential nature of God. God, while bestowing grace, does not necessarily take into account good or bad deeds of a person. Utapala, while complaining to God, says in his *sangraha-stotra* : "Sir, you should have taken into consideration the merits and de-merits of a person while bestowing your grace upon him, but you never do so." In the second half of the verse he remarks : " But, having played this game with me, why are you now delaying the dawn of correct realisation within me?" 97

The gracious activity of God has been accepted both in terms of *bhukti,* that is, enjoyment, and *mukti,* that is, salvation. The Absolute, as represented by Siva and Sakti, and

God, as represented by Sadasiva, Isvara and Anantanatha, is above the plane of Maya, and therefore Saktipata exercised by any of the aspects of the Absoulte leads to the attainment of final liberation. 98

The Kashmir Saivism does not discount self-effort. Self-endeavour has been prescribed. However, it has been said that the self-effort itself is the result of the divine grace. It has been maintained that only such person perseveres in self-effort on whom God bestows his divine grace. The Saktipata is, therefore, the initial point from where starts the whole process of liberation. It creates the devotional emotion of love for God. Devotional worship of God intensifies the divine grace on the worshipper, Both the divine grace and worship of God go together and help the aspirant in his self-experience. 99

Devotion to God has been accepted in the *Sivastotravali* of Utpala as a means of pleasing God, and consequently as a means of Divine grace, God's grace, on the one hand, has been said to be the basic cause for the dawn of devotional love, and on the other hand, devotional love leads to the grace of God. 100

The grace of God directs the soul to a right preceptor who, while bestowing his grace, imparts the theoretical knowledge about (i) the basic reality, (ii) its essential nature and (iii) its relation with the world. Besides, he teaches his disciple the method of Sivayoga through the practice of which the disciple has self-experience The preceptor, moreover, cleanses the disciple's inner soul or all impurities. He does it either through his gracious will or with the help of initiation (*diksa*). This is the common path most of the disciples have to tread. But there are some blessed ones on whom God bestows a speedy grace, and this leads to the ultimate knowledge without a preceptor. Such a spontaneous knowledge is called *pratibha*. 101 Pantarjali also recognises it as a means of truth. 102 Such a disciple is believed to be receiving initiation from the *aghora* powers of the Lord. 103

Pratibha, in fact, is the name of pure psychic lustre of consciousness. It is always present in living beings, 104

Basically the grace of the Lord is of two kinds : one of them creates an earnest desire for complete liberation, whereas the other type of grace results in the *bhoga* or enjoyment of divine powers (*siddhis*). The former type of grace leads to liberation, whereas the latter type does not They are therefore referred to as the *para* and *apara* types of grace. 105 The *para-saktipata* is known as *tivra*, that is, quick. whereas the *apara-saktipata* is of two types : *madhya* and *manda* The *madhya-saktipata* is bestowed on those who have the ambition for *siddhis*, those who are solely interested in *siddhis* are the receipients of the *manda-saktipata*. The *Para-saktipata* is of three kinds : *tivra*, *madhya* and *manda*. *Tivra-saktipata* results in the quick liberation and in the realisation of unity. On leaving his body, the aspirant attains a complete unity with the Absolute. As far as the *madya-tivra-saktipata* is concerned. it results in a sudden and spontaneous knowledge of the Absolute Reality. The rise of this spontaneous knowledge has been termed as *Pratibha*. *Pratibha* itself dispels ignorance without adept's resorting to any teaching 106 Such an adept attains the position of an exalted teacher, and therefore he is in a position to liberate others. 107 As far as the *manda-tivra-saktipata* is concerned. it creates in the adept a keen desire for a right preceptor. 108 For such an adept God appears in the form of a preceptor. 109 The preceptor purifies the soul of the disciple from all impurities through a mere glance or touch. 110 The disciple is thereby freed from all his past deeds, which enables him to experience the state of Sivahood.

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The Nature of Self and Knowledge according to Advaita Vedanta

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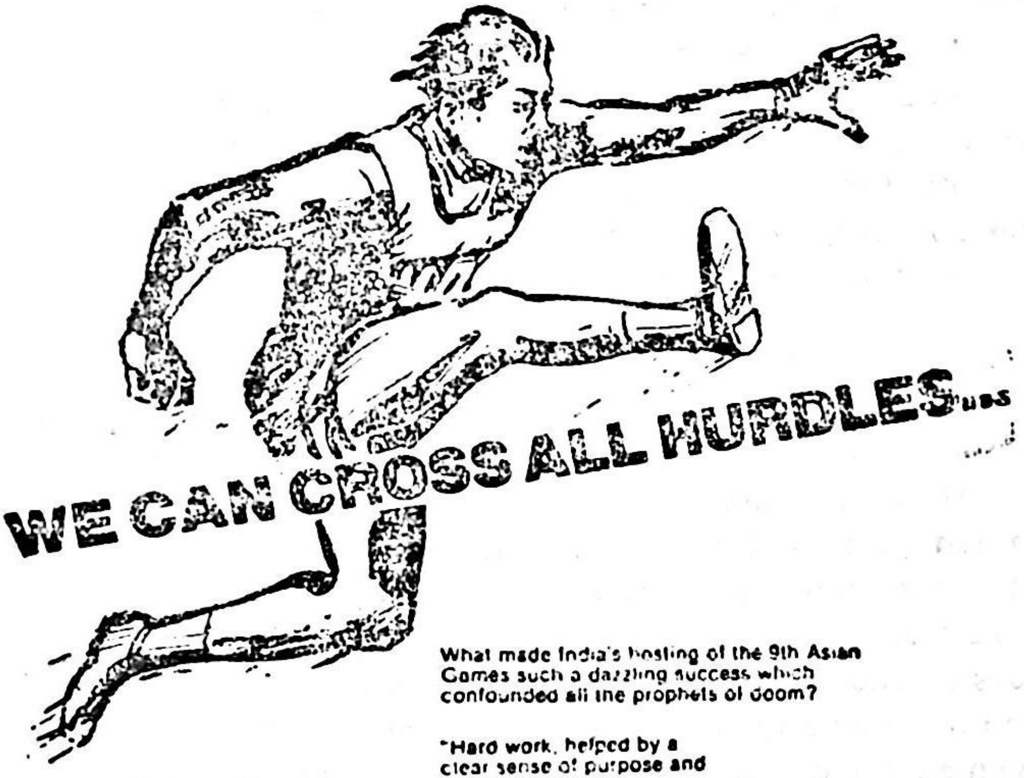
The doctrine of self which is one of the foremost problems of Philosophy has engaged the attention of all the schools of Indian thought, The self is such that, it cannot be denied by any one. ' Everyone is conscious of the existence of his own self and no one thinks I am not " 1 " Like Descartes, (in his serious doubt as to the validity of knowledge, he came to conclusion that ' I think therefore Iam' - cogito - ergo - sum -) Samkara finds the basis of truth in the immediate self-certainty which is untouched by any of the doubts cast on other things. " 2 Self can never be denied for the very idea of denial presupposes it. It cannot be doubted, for all doubts rest on it. All assertions, all doubts, all denials presuppose it It is not derived. It is self-proved. All means of cognition are founded on it. To refute this self is impossible for ' he who tries to refute it, is the self '3

The innermost self is something different from the body, tho sense-organs, vital-forces, mind, intellect and cosmic ignorance. It is the eternal witness, Existence knowledge Bliss and Absolute. Therefore Advaita holds Atman self) is Brahman. The special feature of Advaita is that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it indicates condition of Absolute Brahman or Atman by terms like Sat. Cit and Ananda, All these stand for the non-relational situation. " ... Cit is not a characteristic which is different from Sat. Nor is it different from Anand .... In the Absolute situation of pure Being ....., Sat is Cit and Ananda, Cit is Sat and Ananda, and Ananda is Sat and Cit. "4 So true existence (sat) and Cit go together. Atman cannot be Sat without Cit or Cit without Sat, Therefore the Real is the Rational and the Rational is the Real. 5 It is also of the nature of Bliss, " Brahman (or Atman) is not the sum total of them, nor their Synthesis, Each is the other in a manner of unspeakable impartite identity." 6

According to Sanikara there is only one reality of the Absolute and the Universal consciousness which alone exists-without any duality or distinction without or within it. All distinctions of knowledge into the knower and the known pertain to the realm of a secondary reality, The Absolute consciousness is immediately intnited because it is self-luminious. The define self-luminiosity of consciousness as the capacity of immediate presentation without being an object of knowledge 7 The Atman cannot know itself even as fire cannot burn itself. So it cannot become an object of knowledge. 8 It is not an object of mental perception or intellectual apprehension. 9 It cannot be an object of perception because it cannot split itself into ' jnatr ' and 'jneya' 10 Though it escapes our knowledge it does not entirely escape us since it is the object- of the notion of self and known to exist on account of its immediate presentation. Hence ' Brahman (or Atman) is knowable without thinking ...... know Brahman by being it, is the prescription of Advaita. 11 In fact Kena Upanisad paradoxically puts it as, one who does not know(in the epistemological sense) knows (ontologically), and one who knows (epistemologically) does not know (the Absolute ontological truth) 12

In Advaita epistemology there are two aspects of knowledge which correspond to the paramarthika and the Vyavatrarika orders of reality, the one is ontological and refers to the Absolute itself as constituting Jnana. This is ' swarupa-jnana ' Which is absolute pure, eternal and self-illuminating consciousness. 13 transcending all objectivity and which is indicated in the Upanisadic Statement, ' Brahman which is Reality knowledge and Infinity. 14 This pure form of consciousness, which is the ground of all other forms of knowledge, is nirupadhika and is the very essence of Atman. And the other is Vritti-Jnana which is always related to its object. This empirical variety of knowledge is a product of the limitation of pure-knowledge-through the vrittis of antahkarana (ie. buddhi, ahamkara, citta & manas) and therefore, is a modification of antahkarana appearing in different forms such as perception, inference, etc, which is however, made conscious and attributed to the agency of the individual soul through the mutual superimposition of the sel and the not self, 15 The phenomenal distinction between the knower, the knowledge and the known (Triputi) is also explained in Advaita vedanta through the beginningless adhyala or the mutual superimposition between the self and the non-self having Ne schience for its material-cause. 16 Therefore this Vrithijnana, according to Advaita vedanta, has absolutely no place in the transcendental plane.

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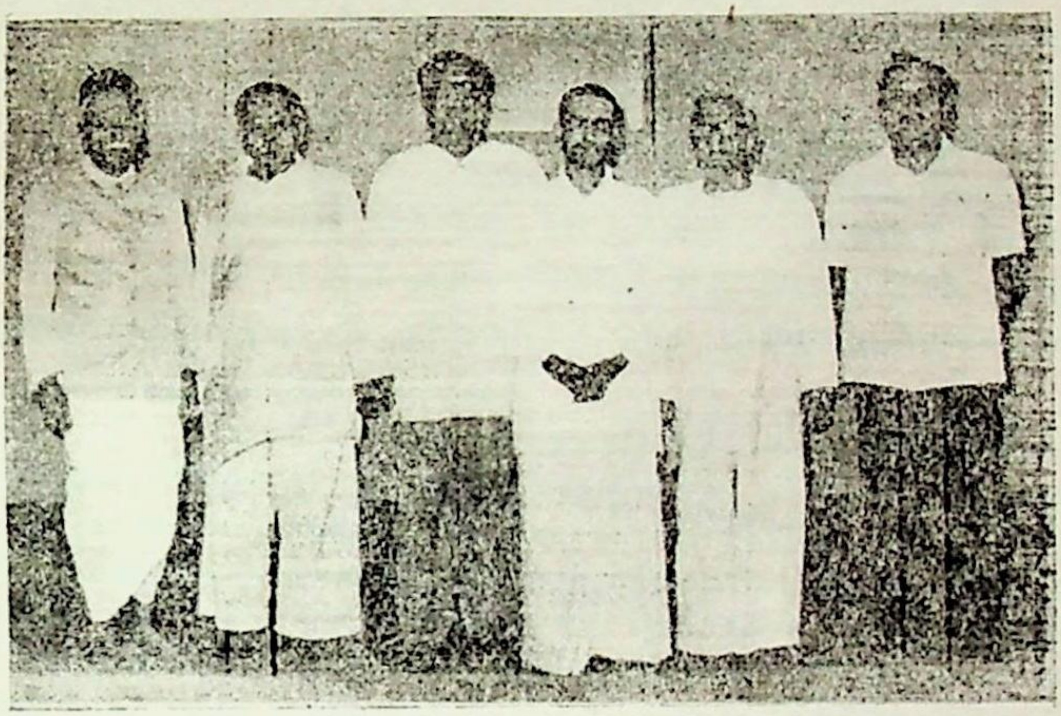

1) J. V. Parulekar 2) D. B. Parulekar 3) Dr. R. V Ramdas
4) H. H. Siddheshwarswami 5) N. S. Metrani
6) A. G. Saraf.

Report of the Academy for the quarter ending 30-6-1983

After about 20 years of Hon service as Secretary and Treasurer, of this Academy, Shri J. V. Parulekar relinquished the posts on account of his old age and other difficulties. Shri D. B Parulekar is now appointed as Secretary and Shri A G, Saraf as Treasurer. They have taken over charge of their respective posts.

Prof : K D Tangod expressed his inability to continue as Editor of Pathway to God. He has therefore been replaced of that charge and Prof : D. G. Deshpande has taken over as Editor of the journal. Prof. Tangod continues as a member of the Editorial Committee.

The Punya-tithi of Gurudeo Ranade was celebrated for 5 days from 2nd to 6th June 1983. On the 6th June Dr. R, V. Ramdas started to deliver Gurudeo Ranade Memorial Lectures on महाराष्ट्रातील संतसंप्रदाय आणि मानवी मूल्यांची जडण घडण His Holiness Shri Siddheshwarswamiji presided over these lectures.

H. H. Shri Siddheshwarswamiji was camping in Gurudeo Mandir for about 2 months. For the first few days, he delivered his talks in Kannad in Shahapur and later on the venue of his lectures was changed to the hall of Gurudeo Mandir itself. The hall was every day fully packed with audience which consisted of a considerable number of ladies. Swamiji's talks were interesting and instructive and were highly apperciated by the audience who used to sit in the hall for one and half hour every day with pin drop silence. The Swamiji left Gurudeo Mandir on 22-6-1983,

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